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1918



# *Oration*

*Delivered by*

**HARRY R. GEARHART**

*Grand Orator*

*at the*

**ANNUAL COMMUNICATION**

*of the*

***Grand Lodge, A.: F.: & A.: M.:***

*of*

***Minnesota***

***JANUARY 16th, 1918.***

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## ORATION

Delivered by Harry R. Gearhart, Grand Orator, at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge A. F. & A. M., of Minnesota January, 16th 1918.

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Right Worshipful Grand Officers and Brothers of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota:

I have not had the pleasure of attending this Grand Lodge for many years—not since I was previously a member as an officer of my own Lodge in Duluth, Palestine Lodge No. 79.

At my last appearance here, in 1903, I was most agreeably inconspicuous. At this time, however, standing before you as your Grand Orator, I feel most embarrassingly conspicuous. For no one whom our Most Worshipful Grand Master could have appointed to this office, could have had fewer qualifications as an orator than I. Yet, so highly do I appreciate the personal honor of being a member and an officer of this Grand body, and so grateful am I for the recognition given my own Lodge through the appointment, that but one course was open to me,—and that was to, with pride and thanks, accept the honor and then perform the duties of the office to the best of my ability.

Because of the long period which has elapsed since my last presence in this Grand body, I do not know the subjects which have been taken by my predecessors in their formal addresses to the Grand Lodge. So, in that which I shall say to you, it may be that I will repeat some of the thoughts which you have here heard expressed before.

But, in the main, the principles of Masonry are few, and, in speaking of or applying them, repetition cannot be well avoided. Again, the principles of Masonry, as applied to his greatest war of all ages, now in progress, have doubtless been, either consciously or unconsciously, all-absorbing thoughts in the minds of most of us. They have been in my mind, and I cannot help making them the theme of this address; yet, because of the fact that we are all

thinking of them, it may be that I can suggest nothing which is not already as clear in your minds as it will be when I have finished.

First of all we must and do recognize the fact that the principles of Masonry are principles of which we Masons have no monopoly. Our illustrious predecessors, whoever they may have been, being men of intelligence and the highest of ideals, sifted and sorted the right and the good from the commonplace, the wrong and the bad, and said "We, as an organization of friends and brothers, will adopt as our standard that which is right and good, and will condemn that which is commonplace, wrong and bad." The right and good existed from the beginning of all things. Masonry simply emphasizes the principles of right and good, teaches its disciples to recognize and follow such principles, and, through the force exerted by its numbers, impresses such principles upon society, or the world.

As Masonry is made up of individuals, political and economical bodies, such as nations and government, cannot be subject to the direct influence of Masonic teachings, and can only be reached indirectly and through the people of the political or economical body, or those who may shape its policy.

In the infancy of Masonic influence, practically every government in the world was an autocracy. Some one individual, or some number of individuals had, by his or their might of mind or body, assumed or been conceded the right to govern, and to make rules called laws for the guidance and control of the people. The ruler was an autocrat—a despot; what was to be considered as right was determined by his will, influenced by passion, prejudice or any other emotion, good or bad.

Right and wrong were then, in a large way, the same as now. But the mental attitude of the peoples of the world was such that they permitted themselves to be governed in such manner.

Masonic influence was then in its infancy. The principles involved in the three great duties which we, as Masons, are charged to inculcate,—to God, to our neighbors and to ourselves, then existed; but, because governments were purely selfish and made selfishness an example for their subjects, these principles were ignored by the great majority. From the most distant ages of the past individuals taught, when permitted to teach, and in their own way, the lesson which we are taught by the common gavel, the trowel, the plumb, square and compass. Individuals taught the advantages of brotherly love, truth, temperance, fortitude, prudence and, last but not least, justice.

Individuals taught the principles of honesty and fair dealing, not only as between man and man, but also upon the part of those

in positions of authority, and the almost divine right of peoples to govern themselves.

Such individuals may or may not have been Rosicrucians, Cabalists, Hermetics or members of any particular school of philosophy which was afterwards evolved into what we now know as Speculative Masonry; yet they were, nevertheless, teaching the principles of Speculative Masonry.

In the course of many centuries, those individuals preaching these principles necessarily made some progress—yet, until about the 17th century, there was but the slightest reflection of the influence of such teaching to be found in the systems of government by which the various peoples of the world were ruled. The reason was, doubtless, that these individuals were working and teaching with but the force which could be exerted by the individual. Each one could speak for himself, but, though he were ever so forceful, his influence was limited to what he and his few converts alone might do. And, with the exception of One whom we all revere, the efforts of none were of great effect in shaping the destinies of peoples. Tyrants still continued to exercise imperial authority over their subjects. From long before the days of Cyrus to those of Cromwell and even later, there was little real change in the actual system of government. Political, religious and civil liberty were practically unknown and even undreamed of excepting by isolated individuals whose powers of expression were usually abruptly terminated by someone in authority.

These forms of government by which the world was for so long ruled, whether we call them autocracies or monarchies, early gave birth to the theory of the divine right of kings—the theory that the ruler was the ruler by divine right—and to such sayings as “The King can do no wrong”, “Might is Right”, and that famous truism of that King of France, “The State; I am the State.”

Plato, that old Greek philosopher, in his “The Republic”, cynically yet truly for his time and for many centuries thereafter, maintained that political governments existed for the benefit of the governors and not for the benefit of the governed, and makes his character, Thrasymachus, say “Might is right; justice is in the interest of the stronger.”

Prior to the middle of the 17th century the government of autocrats which existed throughout the world had received but one substantial check. In the year 1215 there was wrung from King John, of England, that great document, the Magna Charta, or Great Charter, by which certain rights were secured to the people, free from the autocratic power of the ruler. The rights secured were, comparatively, but few, and some were inconsequential. But because it was a first step toward an abridgement of autocratic rule,



it was a real step of magnitude in the march of the people toward government of, by and for the people.

Every schoolboy is taught and we all remember various dates which mark great steps in the progress from a world of autocracies to that goal of every liberty loving people, a world of democracies.

There is the year 1215, marking the grant of the Magna Charta.

There is the date of the Declaration of the Independence of our own beloved country, July 4th, 1776.

There is the date of that proclamation by which our great President Lincoln gave freedom to the slaves, the Emancipation Proclamation, January 1st, 1863.

There is the date of the birth of the present French Republic, 1870.

There is the year 1913, when China took its place among the republics of the world.

The year 1917 we all hope may go down in history as the year of the end of autocratic rule in Russia.

The dates, marking steps in the triumphant onward march of democracy, as distinguished from autocracy, are familiar to everyone.

But there is one period which, unfortunately, cannot be distinguished by a definite or positive date, marking the greatest single step toward democracy which the world has ever known, of which the general public knows and hears but little. Could the step be attached to a definite date, the world might know more of it. But we Masons, who should and do know the most of it, have positive information as to no definite date and know but the period of the great step.

I refer to the birth of Speculative Masonry.

In ancient times we Masons existed as Lodges of actual workmen—operative Masons, practicing the principles and following to some extent, as is shown by the old charges, the doctrines we now teach, though probably only in an incidental way, for we were primarily concerned in the proper application of the useful rules of architecture. But at some time prior to 1717, our ancient, operative brethren admitted to their ranks, as members of their order, individuals who were not operative or actual builders.

Our history previous to the year 1717 is cloudy; dates cannot be definitely fixed; records were either not kept or were destroyed. Just how long before 1717 men were admitted to Lodges of Freemasons who had no connection with the builder's trade or profession, we do not know. But we do know that in the preceding century, many, among those whose names are familiar to us being Ashmole and Mainwaring, both scientists and philosophers, and not at all eligible as builders, were admitted to membership. The pres-



ence of these non-operative Masons had an effect upon the workings of Lodges of Freemasons, and that they crystallized in such Lodges the principles of Speculative Masonry long prior to 1717 cannot be doubted, for that year found these non-operative members in control of the situation, and from that time on Masonry has been as we know it—primarily teaching and inculcating those principles which are so familiar to us today.

Whether the birth of Speculative Masonry is placed in the year 1717 or at some time prior thereto, I say that its birth marks one of the greatest, if not the greatest, single step toward a world of democracies.

Think of the countless ages previous to the birth of Speculative Masonry, during which time autocratic rule was universal, and the influence against autocracy was wielded by so few people. From the very birth of the human race up to the 18th century, the world had been ruled by might, and the principles of which we are reminded by the square, the compass and our other working tools, had played but incidental parts in matters of government.

But taking the year 1717 as the earliest starting point of Speculative Masonry, and the time from which we Masons were bound to practice and teach the beliefs which we now hold, observe the changes which have since transpired in the method of governing.

While a republican form of government had been established in Great Britian in 1649 under Cromwell, the greatest single step taken by any body politic toward a democratic form of government, was that taken by our forefathers in 1776, when they signed a declaration of their independence from Great Britian, and when later they adopted that Constitution which became and has since been the very foundation of our government.

There is no question but that the Constitution of the United States and the success of our form of government has been largely instrumental in influencing other peoples to adopt the same or a similar form of government.

France first endeavored to throw off the yoke of tyranny in 1792, and was only partially successful for but a short time, returning to monarchical rule which it finally overthrew in 1870, since which time it has been a true republic.

The autocratic rule of the King of Italy was, in 1848, by a determined effort upon the part of the people, abridged by a constitution, and he has since been but the executive head of the nation, the real governing power being vested in the people through two legislative bodies. In the same country the autocratic power of the Roman Church in matters of state, was legislated out of existence in 1861, though it retained some semblance of temporal power

until 1870, since which time the people have jealously guarded their civil rights from interference by the Church.

The various countries in our southern hemisphere, after years of persecutions at the hands of selfish European monarchs who truly exemplified the theory that political governments existed only for the benefit of the governors, beginning early in the 19th century, one by one established liberal forms of government.

The political futures of China and Russia are as yet uncertain; but the fact that each has proclaimed and is struggling to establish a republican form of government is sufficient to illustrate the fact I have in mind. And that fact is this—That these numerous and tremendous changes and efforts toward changes in the form of governments, from autocracies to democracies, have taken place since Speculative Masonry came into being.

At first we were naturally few in numbers. But our growth has been most marvellous. The voices of the few who, as individuals, so ineffectively preached and tried to teach the ideals of truth, justice, equality and liberty in past ages, have, since the birth and growth of Speculative Masonry, become the voice of a host teaching and working for those same ideals.

We can only roughly estimate our numbers at present. The Masons in the world may number approximately 2,500,000 and we have even less of an idea as to our total numbers at any time in the past. But we do know that wherever our Lodges have existed, there has been a body of men—men of an intelligence above the average and among the leaders in their communities, whose efforts have been directed toward the spread of the spirit of truth, justice and liberty.

Our arguments may be no more substantial and our beliefs no more conscientious than those of the old individual worker or the old individual philosopher and seeker after the truth; but any argument or belief which is urged, acted and lived by its hundreds of thousands all over the world, is bound to be most effective.

We are sending to the European battle front hundreds of thousands, possibly millions of men, with the idea that, through the force of their numbers, they can cause an effect which could not possibly be produced by a less number. So with Masonry; its principles are urged with the combined force of all its members—a force which should be tremendous. And therefore, considering the principles in which we Speculative Masons believe and for which we labor and have always labored, I say that the birth of Speculative Masonry, as the beginning of the particular force urging Masonic principles, doctrines and ideals, is the period marking the greatest single step toward a world of democracies.

It will be noted that, in mentioning the countries of the civ-

ilized world where a liberal form of government has superseded the original tyrannical form, I have not mentioned Turkey, Austria-Hungary and Germany, the three principal countries which are to-day waging war against democracy—the greatest war, in point of numbers and principles involved, which the world has ever known.

That Masonic principles have not yet permeated the soul of the masses in Mohammedan Turkey and Roman Catholic Austria-Hungary, is not to be wondered at; the reason is apparent why it should there take longer than in other countries. But their ally, Germany, has long been considered as one of the most enlightened nations of the world. Among its people have been found scientists, philosophers, men of letters the equal of any. Its people are free to worship as they please, and are credited with the highest average education among the peoples of the world.

Why, then, is Germany not only fighting this war against the peoples having and believing in a liberal form of government, but the instigator of and leader in the war?

In my judgment, the answer to the question is found, primarily, in the form of government which obtains in the German Empire, and, secondarily, in the peculiar tastes, beliefs and mental characteristics of the members of the Hohenzollern family, of which Kaiser William II is the present head.

The German empire is composed of what were once a number of independent Kingdoms, Duchies and States, now generally called States, each governed by a King or other hereditary ruler. The Kingdom of Prussia is one of these, and the Hohenzollern family has for centuries been its reigning head.

The Empire, consisting of these several so-called States, has what is called a constitutional form of government—that is, the conduct of its affairs is regulated and the powers of its ruler fixed by a constitution adopted in 1870, which also, in theory and only in theory, grants to the people a voice in the government.

This constitution is a very ingenious document. It was adopted practically at the dictation of Prussia, and provides that he who is King of Prussia shall be the ruler of the Empire—the German Kaiser. It also provides for two legislative bodies corresponding in a faint, though very faint, degree to our Congress—there called the Bundesrath and Reichstag. The members of the Bundesrath, or upper house, are appointed by the reigning heads of the several states and kingdoms comprising the Empire. But the ingenuity of the practical working of this develops in the fact that, through the methods by which members are appointed, and the exceptional numbers adopted to Prussia, and the powers given the Prussian members in affairs concerning the army, the navy and taxation, the voice of Prussia dictates the action of the body.

Therefore, in such matters the voice of the Bundesrath is simply the expression of the will of the King of Prussia—the German Kaiser.

The other legislative body, the Reichstag, is composed of members who are elected by the people. This sounds like democracy—but it is not as encouraging as it sounds. For here, again, Prussia furnishes a great majority of the members (232 out of a total of 397) and, what is more important, the Kaiser can at his will dissolve the Reichstag and compel another election of members. If he has an unruly Reichstag which will not yield to his dictates, he can dissolve it and compel another election and continue so doing until he secures a Reichstag where a majority will do his will and indorse measures passed by his Bundesrath. By these constitutional provisions the Kaiser's autocratic power is limited in that he is refused the right to make laws by his word alone as he could were the powers of government vested in him and in no other individual or body. But by that most ingenious constitution of Prussian manufacture, the Kaiser has merely to conform to or put up with a little red tape, and his will is law.

At the beginning of the present war we heard much from German sources as to how Germany had been attacked by France and Russia, and how Germany was forced into the war in self defense. The reason for this is found in another provision of this remarkable constitution which gives the Kaiser the right to declare a war only in defense of the Empire, and which all authorities agree impliedly prohibits him from declaring an offensive war. Yet the constitution fails to state what shall happen if he does declare a war of offense; and, as it is a fact that every German soldier and sailor is bound by an oath of allegiance, not to the Empire and not to the particular state from which he comes, but to the Kaiser personally, it is not difficult to see that the Kaiser, with the army and navy under his absolute direction, can actually declare and prosecute a war of offense and conquest, without any serious consequences by reason of his overruling the provisions of the constitution.

I have no doubt but that the argument that Germany was the country attacked in the war, was made by the German people in order to defend their constitution to themselves and to the outside world, and to justify their Kaiser's declaration of war.

From these facts, it will be seen that Germany though assuming to be a so-called constitutional monarchy, is really an autocracy—an autocracy which, headed by an individual of decidedly autocratic tendencies, can be as pronounced an autocracy as ever existed.

And what are the peculiar tastes and beliefs and mental characteristics of the members of the Hohenzollern family, of which the present Kaiser is the head?



In the first place, from the rulers of the original Kingdom of Prussia which contained approximately 24,000 square miles, they have extended their rule over what is now the German Empire, an area approximating 209,000 square miles; and practically every square mile of that additional territory has been brought under the rule of the Prussian reigning family by force of arms or coercion.

For several centuries past the heads of this house have been believers in the doctrine of the right of might, and have had the physical and mental attainments necessary to enforce that doctrine upon their own and neighboring peoples.

This family also holds another belief, one of which much has been said and written, but one which I doubt is thoroughly appreciated by anyone who is not imbued with the spirit of democracy. That is the belief that the Hohenzollern family rules by Divine right—that it has been especially chosen by the Almighty to rule over the people of the German Empire, and that the Almighty and the Kaiser, working together, can do no wrong. Many expressions by various German rulers can be found which prove such beliefs, but I will quote but two by the present Kaiser—William II.

In a famous speech made by him in Bremen in 1897, the Kaiser said:

"If we have been able to accomplish what has been accomplished, it is due above all things to the fact that our house (the House of Hohenzollern,) possesses a tradition by virtue of which we consider that we have been appointed by God to preserve and direct for their own welfare the people over whom he has given us power."

Again, in a much commented upon speech at Königsberg, in 1910, he said:

"It was upon this spot that my grandfather in his own right placed the crown upon his head, insisting once again that it was bestowed upon him by the grace of God alone, and not by parliaments and meetings and decisions of the people. He thus regarded himself as the chosen instrument of Heaven, and, as such, carried out his duties as a ruler and a lord. I consider myself such an instrument of Heaven, and shall go my way without regard to the views and opinions of the day."

With such a principle dogmatically asserted for centuries by one ruler after another, especially as that ruler has been able to defend, and has defended that principle with force of arms, is at any wonder that the German people themselves have become imbued with that belief?

And that you may appreciate to what extent this monstrous belief has become the belief of the German people, listen to the expressions of Germans of various callings.

A minister of the Gospel, Rev. Lehman, in a published sermon the text of which was "On the German God", says among other things—

"If God is for us who can be against us? It is enough for us to be a part of God.

"The German soul is the world's soul—God and Germany belong to one another.

"We are beginning slowly, humbly and yet with a deep gladness, to divine God's intentions. It may sound proud, my friends, but we are conscious that it is also in humbleness we say it; the German soul is God's soul; it shall and will rule over mankind.

"It is no foolish over-valuation of ourselves, no aggressive arrogance, no want of humility, when we more and more let Bismarck's faith prevail within us, that God has taken the German nation under his special care, or, in any case, has some special purpose in view for it. Germany is the center of God's plans for the world."

One H. S. Chamberlain, born an Englishman but, having lived in Germany for many years, became a German citizen and imbued with all the irreligious arrogance which the Prussian belief has instilled into all Germans, in a book written by him, entitled "Political Ideals", says—

"I want to make clear in what sense we may say, without extravagance or the least trace of self exaltation, Germany is chosen. Germany is chosen for her own good, and that of other nations, to to undertake their guidance. Providence has placed the appointed people, at the appointed moment, ready for the appointed task."

In another work entitled "Confidence", the same author uses this language—

"On this planet, as a result of milleniums of development, has it come to this, that Germany, and in a wider sense, Germanism, within and without the Empire has become an instrument of God, an indispensable, irreplaceable instrument of God? This question I ask and answer it in the affirmative."

One E. von Heyking, at one time a German consul in New York, in an article entitled "The Real England", says—

"England is our worst enemy and we will fight her until we have overthrown her. So it may please our Great Ally who stands behind the German battalions, behind our ships and U-boats, and behind our blessed militarism."

I have had before me expressions to the same effect from many different German writers and speakers. But these few suffice to show the wide spread effect of the belief of the House of Hohenzollern that it rules by Divine right, in that the German people believes that it has an especial alliance with God.

Such a belief as this is most dangerous, not only for the ones



possessing it, but for their neighbors. It would be most dangerous belief for a man super-humanly fair, but it is infinitely more dangerous when held by one of the powerful nations of the world—a lusty, growing nation whose interests conflict with those of every other nation, with a great army, a great navy, great wealth and arrogant in power.

Co-ordinate with this belief, making it still more dangerous, is the German idea that peace is not a condition to be desired, unless it be through force of expediency, and that war is noble, sacred and to be desired as a necessary factor toward a higher development.

This belief has also been taught the German people for many years. It is the philosophy of those two German writers and thinkers, Treitschke and Nietzsche, of whom we have heard so much during the past twenty years or more, and it is the doctrine which one would expect to appeal to a military loving people. And, as it has the approval of their Prussian ruling house, it has become thoroughly implanted in the German mentality.

Listen to what has been said upon the subject by Germans from many walks in life—

The great von Moltke, warrior as he was, as long ago as 1880, wrote—

“Perpetual peace is a dream, and it is not even a beautiful dream; war forms a part of the eternal order instituted by God. Without war humanity would sink into materialism.”

Treitschke, in his work entitled “Politics” says—

“God above us will see to it that war shall always recur, as a drastic medicine for ailing humanity.

“The appeal to arms will be valid until the end of history, and therein lies the sacredness of war.”

Again, in the same work, he says—

“It is only since the last war (1870) that a sounder theory has arisen of the State and its military power. War, therefore, will endure to the end of history, so long as there is a multiplicity of states.”

Nietzsche, in 1885, wrote—

“The time for petty policies is past; the next century will bring the struggle for the dominion of the world—the compulsion to great politics.”

In his “War and Warriors,” he writes—

“Ye say it is the good cause which halloweth every war? I say unto you it is the good war which halloweth every cause.”

And again, in the same work—

“Ye shall have peace as a means to new wars—and the short peace more than the long.”

One Otto von Gottberg, the editor of a very popular and widely read magazine, called "Weekly Paper for the Youth of Germany," expresses himself in such paper—

"Let us laugh with all our lungs at the old women in trousers who are afraid of war, and therefore complain that it is cruel and hideous. No, war is beautiful. Its august grandeur elevates the heart of man high above all that is commonplace and earthly."

One Klaus Wagner, a prolific writer upon German politics and policies, in his work entitled "War," says—

"Only over the black gate of the cemetery can we read the words 'Eternal peace for all peoples.' For peoples who live and strive, the only maxim and motto must be eternal war."

These few quotations well indicate the trend of German thought for years past, but such thought is definitely summed up in the now famous book entitled "Germany and the next War," published in 1912 by General Bernhardi, then Chief of a Department in the great German General Staff. The very title of the work, "Germany and the next War," is suggestive of the German thought that a war should come. The fact is taken for granted.

These quotations from such work are but a few of many thousands which I could use, and I assure you that they but feebly express the spirit of the entire work. He says—

"The efforts directed toward the abolition of war must not only be termed foolish but absolutely immoral, and must be stigmatized as unworthy of the human race.

"The duties and obligations of the German people cannot be fulfilled without drawing the sword.

"Since almost every part of the globe is inhabited, new territory must, as a rule, be obtained at the cost of its possessors—that is to say, by conquest, which thus becomes a law of necessity.

"In one way or another we must square our account with France if we wish for a free hand in our international policy. France must be so completely crushed that she can never again come across our path.

"If we wish to compete with them, (the other powers) a policy which our population and civilization both entitle and compel us to adopt, we must not hold back in the hard struggle for the supremacy of the world.

"The brutal incidents inseparable from every war vanish completely before the idealism of the main result. Strength, truth and honor come to the front and are brought into play."

In connection with the last quotation, "The brutal incidents inseparable from every war vanish completely before the idealism of the main result," listen to what is said by one of the men whom this government of ours sent over to France to investigate stories and rumors of German brutalities. This man, a Minister of the Gospel

whose name is known in almost every household, and respected wherever known, writes;

"The cold catalog of German atrocities . . . . makes the most sickening page in history."

Some of you older Brothers can look back to the time of the Indian uprising here in our own state. The outrages committed by the savages here and by the bloodthirsty Apaches in the southwest, are pages in history, and most terrible pages, too. But this Government official says:

"The cold catalog of German atrocities . . . . makes the most sickening page in history . . . . leaves one nauseated, physically and mentally. . . . .

"These atrocities were not committed in a mood of drunkenness, nor in an hour of anger, but were organized by a so-called German efficiency, and perpetrated on a deliberate, cold, precise, scientific policy of German frightfulness.

"It is not simply that they looted factories, carried away machinery, robbed houses, bombed every farmhouse and granary, left no plow or reaper, chopped down every pear tree and plum tree, with every grape vine, and poisoned all wells. The Germans slaughtered old men and matrons, mutilated captives in ways that can only be spoken of by men in whispers; violated little girls until they were dead . . . . and the worst atrocities cannot even be named."

This Commissioner, securing his information as an official of our Government and for the purpose of an official report, recites specific instances of many such brutalities, among which I find one as to a child of two years, pierced through the body with a soldier's bayonet, and so carried away on the shoulder of the soldier; the cutting off of the hands and feet of a sixteen year old boy; the killing of a child three years of age, and nailing it to a door by its hands and feet: the cutting off of the breasts of women.

Only this last week I met a man who told me that he himself had, in an eastern hospital, some time ago, seen and talked with two Red Cross nurses, who, while engaged upon their work of mercy with the Allies in Belgium, had been captured by Germans, who had cut off their hands at the wrists and, in that condition and pregnant by German soldiers, had been returned to the Allies and been sent back to this, their own country.

And these are some of the "brutal incidents inseparable from every great war" which, according to this General Bernhardt, this member of the Kaiser's General Staff," vanish completely before the idealism of the main result."

The present Kaiser's belief in the league between himself and his people and God, is proven by utterances which I have heretofore quoted. If it is necessary to prove, by his words, his belief in the right of might, in the doctrine of war, I quote from a printed pam-

phlet distributed by the Kaiser at a conference in Potsdam as far back as 1892. In it he states that the ultimate goal of the German people is the Germanization of all the world, and says—

“From childhood I have been under the influence of five men,—Alexander, Julius Caesar, Theodoric Second, Frederick the Great, Napoleon. Each of these men dreamed a dream of world empire. They failed. I am dreaming a dream of the German world empire—and my mailed fist shall succeed.”

Can you not from these words analyze the character of the man who gave utterance to them? A vain man, or he would not have placed himself above such famous characters of history as those he named; a worshipper of military power, or the five individuals under whose influence he believed himself to be would hardly have been five who might well be considered as the military geniuses of all time; a man with an inordinate desire for power, or he would not confess to a dream of a German world empire; a man with every confidence in the strength of his military establishment, or he would not promise the fulfillment of his dream through his mailed fist.

What a dream of power! What an ambition to express to a people already believing in his league with God Almighty, and already made to believe in war as a thing to be welcomed, yes, desired.

We, my Brothers, Americans that we are, cannot at this time help but feel that German people are our enemies. We, of America, are at war with them. We must destroy or we and our principles will be destroyed. Yet, considering the doctrines which for so long have been preached to that people—that God is with them, that their ruler is their ruler because God has made him so and wishes him to be so,—that war is grand and to be desired, and that its brutalities vanish entirely before the idealism of the main result, that they are entitled to world dominion and that their arms can win it for them, we cannot altogether wonder that they believe in and act, as they have, upon these doctrines. I do not suggest this in extenuation of the acts of any German, but only to prove that we must, for the cause of this war and for the prevention of another, look behind and beyond the individual, yes, even behind the Kaiser,—to the condition in Germany which makes it possible for one man or one family to dominate an entire people,—which makes it possible for one man to bring such a calamity upon the world. We must look to the system of government,—that autocracy masked as a constitutional monarchy,—that autocracy paraded before the world as a semi-democracy through the representation of the people in the Reichstag. In that system of government which permits a vain, military-mad, selfish seeker of world power, to dominate and autocratically rule a great people, is



found the thing which made this war possible, and the thing which, in the interest of the peace of the world, must be changed when the nations of the world sit in council to determine the future of Germany, And, Brothers, the future of Germany will be decided at a council of the world. And I thank God that our own country, the greatest democracy the world has ever known, can now honorably occupy a position in that council. And it would, in my judgment, have been a misfortune for the world and especially for our Order, had this greatest of all wars, involving the greatest of all principles—principles which we Masons have adopted as our principles—been brought to a termination at a time when our own great democracy could not have honorably demanded and willingly been conceded a prominent part in determining the terms upon which the conflict should be settled, and the conditions which should obtain after the war.

The lessons which we, in our Lodges are taught by our working tools and through our lectures, were never designed to and cannot now be considered in any limited or restricted sense. Our standard of and pledge to justice, for instance, must be considered in a large way and not merely with reference to disputes between individuals. It means that we shall stand for whatever is right and good and just.

That remarkable document, our own revered Declaration of Independence from Great Britain, was merely a recital of injustice and wrongs suffered by the colonies at the hands of the mother country and a conclusion that, because thereof, we must alter the then existing system of government and be free and independent.

Of the committee of five which drafted that great document, every man was a Mason; and of the fifty-five who finally signed it, it is believed that every man but one was a mason.

That Declaration was one of the greatest protests against injustice the world has ever known,—and, as such—and considering those who prepared and signed it, it must be esteemed as an exposition of Masonic principles as applied to the condition then existing.

It would have been little short of a world calamity had conditions been such that representatives of our government, with their minds charged with those principles which are embodied in the Declaration of Independence through the work of those Brother Masons, Washington, Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, Livingston, Sherman and a host of others, could not with absolute self respect and entire propriety, have taken a prominent part in demanding of Germany, and for poor Belgium and France, that which is just,—and in insuring the rest of the world against conditions which existed under a world of autocracies.

We Masons can have no sympathy with the principle of autocratic government. We Masons can have no sympathy for any man who claims that God Almighty has given him the right to rule a people, nor can we uphold a people which professes a belief that God is with it in preference to the rest of the world. We cannot meet upon the level, nor can we dwell together in unity with those holding any such beliefs.

We can have no sympathy with a people believing that might is right and whose desire is to forcibly dominate the entire world. For such beliefs are directly contrary to the Masonic teachings of the compass.

We can have no sympathy with a people which believes and teaches that war is a beautiful thing. We can have no sympathy with a people believing that the brutal incidents inseparable from every war vanish completely before the idealism of the main result.

We can have no sympathy with or for people who, when it is to their interest to do so, violate a solemn treaty with other nations, and lightly refer to it as a mere scrap of paper. The lessons which we, as Masons, learn from the square cause us to view such action with abhorrence.

We can have no sympathy for people who conduct a war in violation of all codes of civilized warfare,—who wreak their vengeance upon women, children and non combatants, generally,—who do not respect the Red Cross,—who wantonly and unnecessarily wreck and ruin those magnificent monuments erected by your operative brethren centuries ago.

These things are not in accord with our Masonic principles, therefore we, as Masons, must oppose them.

It is a matter of personal regret to me that our Blue Lodges, as Masonic institutions, cannot or do not take a more prominent part in matters vital to our communities, or to our country. The Blue Lodge stands, upon principle, for everything that is good and is opposed to everything which is bad; yet my personal belief is that, as an institution, it does all too little in a public way; that it should not be content merely to impress its principles upon its members and through them exert its influence for good, but that it should itself take its place as a direct and open advocate of its principles striving to directly impress them upon all the world. However, our conservatism is the result of centuries of conservatism, and no one can expect any such change as I hope for to be brought about in any manner other than the most gradual. So, we cannot expect that Masonic institutions, as such, can take any prominent part in the conduct of the war or in the adjustment of conditions which must obtain when the war is over. But, as individual Masons, if we are



true Masons, if we believe in the lessons which are taught us in our Lodges, we, every man of us from the youngest Entered Apprentice in the northeast corner of the Lodge to the Master, must do everything in our power to support our country during the war and until it is brought to a successful conclusion.

Our obligation to do this is two-fold. We are American citizens, and it is the duty of every citizen to stand solidly behind our government at Washington. But we are also Masons, and we are under the additional obligation of defending our principles and our teachings. Therefore I say to you, Brothers, that we Masons of the United States are doubly obligated to uphold and fight for the principles urged by our government, and to annihilate that German system of government which is the primary cause of the war.

Most of us are beyond the age when we would be permitted to actually bear arms for our country and our principles. As the situation is at present, that must be done by younger men. But the use of the rifle and the work in the trench is but one form of the fighting in this war.

The man who supports the Red Cross, the man who furnishes the Government with his money, either through the purchase of the government's bonds or the payment of taxes, the man who contributes to the work of the Y. M. C. A., the man who eats less meat and less wheat and, in general, regulates his food supply according to the requests of the authorized government official, the man who, if he be an employer or an employee, for the time being adjusts his grievances arising out of labor conditions so that a strike or a cessation of work is impossible, the man who produces the food and the materials necessary to the conduct of the war,—each of these is doing a share of the fighting just as surely as the man who is in the first line trenches in Belgium and in France.

There is still another and a very practical way in which we Masons can support and be of service to our government and our country.

There is still too much German sentiment among our people. There are still those whose sympathies are with their fatherland rather than with this land where they have prospered and which they have chosen as their home in preference to the fatherland. There are still those who, maliciously or because of selfish political reasons, criticize our government for entering into the war. There is still too much seditious talk. There are many who still spread German propaganda, the intended effect of which is to cause some measure of weakness in the spirit of some of our people. Along this line are the stories of the mismanagement of our soldier's camps, the immorality in the army, the ravages of disease, etc., the misappropriation of Red Cross funds and supplies. More talk of

this kind is that to the effect that we are in the war because munition makers want to keep busy, or that this is a Wall Street war, and that, now we are in the war, France and England are not exerting themselves to the utmost, and are shirking their part of the burden.

If such stories are believed, they will naturally create in our minds some measure of dissatisfaction with the government's conduct of the war. And German propaganda is calculated only to sow seeds of dissatisfaction in the minds of her opponents.

We have doubtless made mistakes in grasping the new problems which we have had to confront. When one considers the vast number of people in our country, suddenly called upon to meet in a practical and efficient manner conditions entirely new to them, is it any wonder that these people upon whom new duties are thrust are not immediately 100% efficient? Mistakes have been made and will continue to be made, but I know that our government is weeding out the incompetents, and will continue to weed them out, and, to, as rapidly as is possible render us as nearly 100% efficient as it is humanly possibly for us to be.

There are still those who, for selfish reasons or to help Germany, talk about the unfairness of the draft.

All these things, if not constituting actual sedition, or, the more inclusive term "espionage," as it is now called, come close to it.

Let me give you a political definition of the crime of espionage, as we now know it.

The United States Statutes provide "whoever, when the United States is at war, shall willfully make or convey false reports or false statements with intent to interfere with the operation or success of the military or naval forces of the United States, or to promote the success of its enemies, and whoever, when the United States is at war, shall wilfully cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny or refusal of duty in the military or naval forces of the United States, or shall wilfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment services of the United States" is guilty of espionage.

Bearing this partial definition in mind, you will see that there are still too many seditious utterances—too much talk which approaches sedition, or espionage.

I am officially connected with one of the Local Boards in my own city, and I know whereof I speak.

It is most vital to our government that this German propaganda and this seditious talk be suppressed.

The government has its agents throughout the country, but they are all too few. And should every one of us Masons make it our individual business to do what we can do to trace this talk to

its source, or to investigate the channels through which it comes, and to report to the United States District Attorney, or to any of his assistants, what we may hear of such talk and what we may know or learn of its source, thus giving him the benefit of what we have heard and learned, and putting him in a position where he can take such action as he may see fit, we will be doing a real service to our country.

We Masons must all get into this war and fight—fight for our country and our Masonic principles, in one way if not in another. Let us realize that every assistance we give our government, every thing we do to help our soldiers, every contribution we make to the Red Cross, everything of which we deprive ourselves in order that our soldiers may be better supplied, everything which we can do to keep the wheels of industry and of commerce moving at a greater efficiency than ever before, everything which we can do to secure the punishment of the spreaders of this seditious talk and thus suppress it, is not only giving to our government the support it deserves from its citizens, but is fighting the battle in defense of the principles and teachings of our Order. Let us not be slackers in our obligations to our government or in our obligations to Masonry.

This war **must** be won by our country and its allies. If Germany triumphs, the theory of the Divine right of kings will be elevated to the position it held three and more centuries ago; the doctrine that might is right will be re-established as it was in the days when the world was ruled by the sword; the suggestion of honor and justice among nations will be a thing to laugh at; any weaker people will be the natural prey of the stronger, and every nation will have to be an armed camp, ready to defend itself upon a moment's notice.

That the war be won by our country and its allies is as much to our interests as Masons as it is to our interests as loyal Americans for if it be lost, Masonry will have lost most of the material result of its teachings and the application of its principles.

It will be won because it must be won. And, when the representatives of the nations sit in council to determine the terms of the settlement with Germany, while we Masons, as such, cannot take part in such conference, I pray that those who will dictate the terms of the adjustment may be either Masons or as staunch supporters and advocates of Masonic principles as were those who dictated and signed our own Declaration of Independence, and as those, of whom our Brother LaFayette was one, who instilled into the French people the principles of Liberty, Equality and Justice.

If they are, the House of Hohenzollern will no longer rule the German people; there will be none left to support the theory that mortal man can rule a people by virtue of a God given right to do

so, the German's form of government will be changed, so that no one man or no few men will longer have the power to bring conflict and hatred, grief and sorrow to a whole world; Masonic principles will triumph and, in the language of our President, "Democracy will be made safe for the world."



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